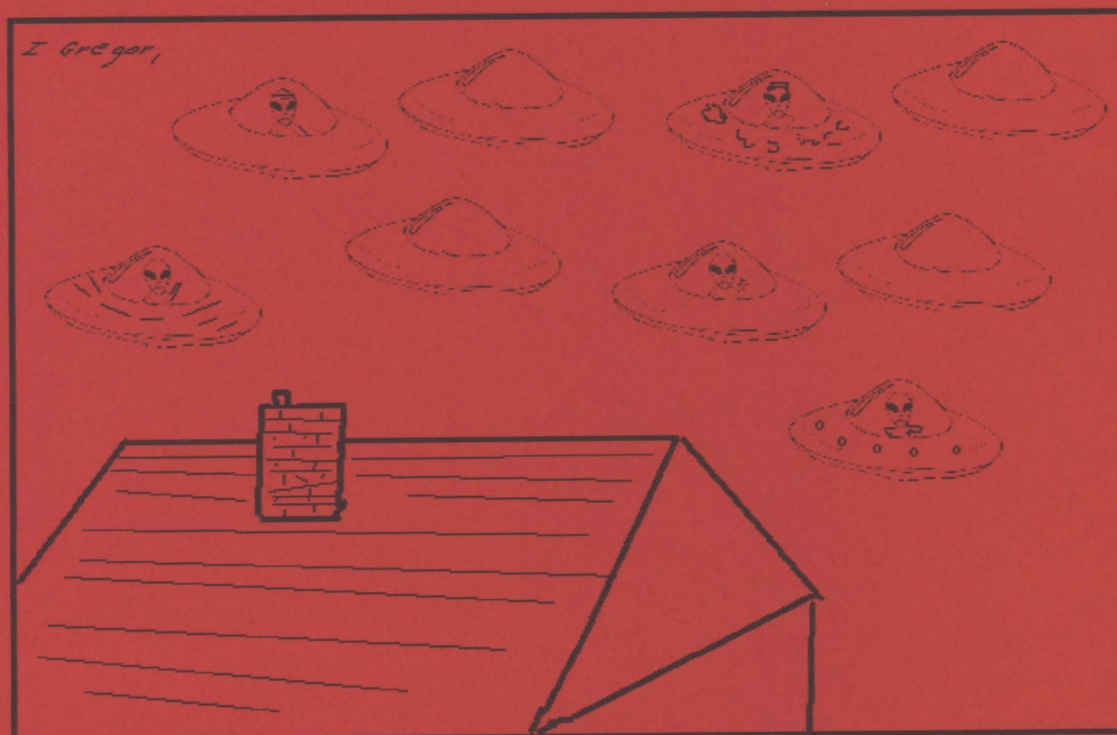


YUFOS

YORKSHIRE UFO SOCIETY

PROJECT RED BOOK

(Vol 3 #12, June 2000)



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AN INTERVIEW WITH LOREN COLEMAN

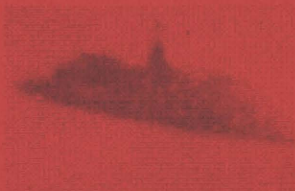
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YUFOS



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To re-print articles in this magazine please enquire at the above address- that means me, Dave. I'm sure to say "yes", but it is nice to ask first, y'know?

The articles and views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor, YUFOS members, or

"Asses and elbows, people!"

AN INTERVIEW WITH LOREN COLEMAN

(Introduction taken from The Cryptozoologist website:) *Loren Coleman is one of the world's leading cryptozoologists. An honorary member of several international cryptozoological organizations, he is a Life Member of the International Society of Cryptozoology. Coleman has written books and more than two hundred articles on the subject, has appeared frequently on radio and television programs, and has lectured from Idaho to London. He has been both on- and off-camera consultant to NBC-TV's "Unsolved Mysteries", A&E's "Ancient Mysteries" "In Search of History", Discovery Channel's "In the Unknown, " and other reality-based programs. He contributes a bimonthly cryptozoology column, "On the Trail," to the London-based international magazine Fortean Times, and "Mysterious World" to Fate.*

DAVE BAKER: All readers of PRB will have heard the term 'ufologist', but what exactly is a cryptozoologist?

LOREN COLEMAN: A cryptozoologist is one who studies or pursues cryptozoology, the study of hidden animals.

"Cryptozoology" was coined by Dr. Bernard Heuvelmans in his personal correspondence among colleagues in the 1950s, after the 1955 French publication of his book *On the Track of Unknown Animals*. The first published use of the word "cryptozoology" was in 1959 when a book by Lucien Blancou was dedicated to "Bernard Heuvelmans, master of cryptozoology."

Since 1982, Bernard Heuvelmans has written extensively in the journal *Cryptozoology* on his current thoughts defining and redefining "cryptozoology."

Meanwhile, ISC's Vice President Dr. Roy Mackal has written: "...the term 'cryptozoology' seems to me particularly appropriate, coming as it does from the Greek work *kryptos*, meaning 'hidden,' 'unknown,' 'secret,' 'enigmatic,' 'mysterious'; hence literally the study of hidden animals"

One important element in the study of hidden animals as envisioned in current cryptozoology is the input of local, native, explorer, and traveller traditions, sightings, tales, legends and folklore of the as-yet unverified animals. It is for this very reason that most, but not all, of the animals under pursuit are large ones.

Also, it should be noted, a general sense among Russian cryptozoologists, especially as communicated through the books of Dmitri Bayanov, is that "cryptozoology" is the study of the evidence for hidden animals. Therefore, not too simply, cryptozoology is the study of hidden animals (whether large or small), to

date not formally recognised by what is often termed Western science or formal zoology but supported in some way by testimony (in its broadest definition) from a human being and evidence of their presence.

Myself and many other ufologists admit that they first became interested in UFOs via the film *'Close Encounters of the Third Kind'*, or by an actual 'UFO' experience. How did you become involved with the search for unidentified animals? My own interest in cryptozoology came from reading John Keel's *"Strange Creatures from Time & Space"*...

In 1960, I saw the Japanese film, *Half Human* twice within a 24 hour period, and it stimulated many questions in my mind about the reality of Abominable Snowmen. I began to read, write some of the leading people in the field, and interview eyewitnesses about their encounters with cryptids, the unknown animals. I was hooked, and, as they say, the rest is history.

What are you working on at the moment? I hear that there is a Museum of Cryptozoology and a regular journal in the works...

I always have a dozen projects going, books in progress, columns being written, expeditions being planned, and the day-to-day living and work to support my passion that is cryptozoology.

Yes, the Museum of Cryptozoology is definitely been on the front burner lately, and lots of exciting things are happening. The journal will come along, but the museum demands a lot of attention right now. I encourage folks to visit my website <http://www.lorencoleman.com> for updates on my pursuits and news of the museum.

Ufologists talk about 'field work', but in your search for unknown animals you really have been out there in the wild outdoors. Tell us about some of your expeditions...

The most recent one, of course, is always the easiest to talk about. Going to Scotland during the Summer of 1999, with my sons, Malcolm and Caleb, will be a lifelong wonder.

Nevertheless, searching in northern California for Bigfoot, going through the swamps of Florida looking for the Skunk Ape, boating through the bayous some distance from New Orleans looking for the Honey Island Monster, and many other adventures are all good memories.

I've done fieldwork since the Yeti caught my interest in 1960, leading me to research mysterious panther sightings and reports of apes in the American Midwest. I have travelled to 45 states, throughout Canada, Mexico, and the Virgin Islands interviewing witnesses of lake monster, Sasquatch, giant snake, mystery feline, phantom kangaroo, thunderbird, and other creature reports and folklore.

Have you ever glimpsed any cryptids yourself?

I've found traces, footprints in central Illinois, screeches in the southern Illinois, teeth marks in Ohio, and so forth, but, no, I've not seen any cryptids. Of course, there was the time the black panther jumped across a road near Anna, Illinois...

Like UFOs, cryptids always seem tantalisingly out of reach. Do you rate the evidence for creatures such as the Sasquatch: i.e. footprint casts, tape recordings, spoor samples etc, greater than the dodgy photos we usually get in the UFO business? What do you consider the most convincing evidence for the existence of animals unrecognised by science?

Cryptozoologically speaking, the cryptids leave behind tangible evidence, traditions, and eyewitness accounts. The evidence does seem, statistically, at least, to be more "solid."

Cryptids, however, are still hidden until an actual body or physical tissue is produced. That is the best evidence.

I know that you are particularly interested in Bigfoot and other hairy hominid reports. What is it that attracts you so much to this particular creature?

It is related to the origins of my interest in the field, and my later studies and involvement in academic anthropology.

What do you think of the recent claim by the man who said he had discovered a zipper on the Patterson film Bigfoot, by repeatedly enlarging a photocopy of the creature?

I wrote columns on this for *Fate*, and over the years, discussed similar claims in *Fortean Times*. The short story is that the individual involved was helping his son with a school report, transferred some pictures from a book, enlarged them on a colour copier, and said he saw something.

Considering the artifacts that can come into play here, it was as if he was seeing pirate ships in the clouds. There's a whole undercurrent of politics here too, as this man use to be the agent of the researcher who owes the print rights to the Patterson Film, until they had a falling out, and suddenly the "agent" is finding fault in the photos. It's a lot more than it seems, but there's no zipper there. Just bad feelings.

A recent programme '*World's Greatest Hoaxes Finally Revealed*' presented what it called 'proof' that the Patterson film Bigfoot was actually a Hollywood actor in a suit. Where do you stand on the Patterson film?

I talked to the producer on this show, and also have written about the terrible debunking job they did (e.g. identifying a ufo skeptic as a "Bigfoot researcher"). The Patterson Film has stood the test of time, and many scientific and serious analyses. I consider it a positive piece of evidence in support of a population of PNW unknown hairy hominoids.

Do you think that many of the skeptical arguments against the existence of hominids have any credence? Some naturalists argue the lack of a regular food supply, for example, or ask why no-one has ever presented a corpse...

Skeptical arguments have to be considered. People do make mistakes, some misidentifications are involved, and a few fakes and hoaxes creep into the field. There's no doubt about a food supply. Most are small meat-eaters and vegie eaters. What's the problem here? Most wilderness areas have a large food supply.

How often do we find a dead bear or dead mountain lion in the woods? Almost never. Porcupines and rodents eat the bones of dead animals. And most dying animals hide themselves in caves, and other quiet places when they feel sick - and then die. We are not surprised we haven't found any Bigfoot bones or bodies.

In *The Field Guide to Bigfoot, Yeti, and Other Mystery Primates Worldwide* (Avon, 1999), there's a whole section on how these hominoids have been killed, and while they usually are not recorded within the scientific realm.

Do you think that all cryptids are really just 'normal' animals that have yet to be officially classified, or do you think there may be a more paranormal explanation for some of them?

I reject explaining one unknown with another more shadowy one. I think the kind of cryptozoology I am interested in is fully based in the biological sphere.

Do you think there is any credence to the more bizarre BHM reports, which seem to involve the creature being impervious to bullets, vanishing into thin air, or even apparent connections with UFOs?

I find such reports overly influenced by the bias of the investigators, the frame of reference of the chroniclers, and infrequently by the conceptual milieu of the eyewitnesses. A Bigfoot moving into the tree-line may seem to disappear, its hair cover might appear to be impervious to bullets or the shooter could have missed. I have found that once you start asking people about the unknown, they will also tell you stories of other items of the unexplained. Some writers have naturally mixed this together. But I do not think there is an "apparent" or even obvious link between cryptids and UFOs.

Anyone who has read a tabloid newspaper will have heard of Bigfoot, Out-Of-Place Big Cats and the Loch Ness Monster, but the world of cryptozoology is populated by a much larger and varied menagerie of unidentified creatures. Tell us about some of the lesser-known cryptids.

I really cannot do justice to this kind of question unless I'd write a book, and guess what, I have, on this very thing. This is just such a grand question that I must refer your readers to *Cryptozoology A to Z* (Simon and Schuster, 1999) which has 200 entries, and lots of stories of many, many lesser-known cryptids.

The Loch Ness Monster is the most famous of the British Isles' monsters, but there are many other reputed aquatic beasts, such as Ogoopgo and Champ in the U.S and even Russian and Chinese equivalents. Could such large creatures really live in enclosed bodies of water, and more importantly, breed?

Most of these lakes and loch are not as "landlocked" as people think. When I was at Loch Ness, it was so obvious that one end of it, where the River Ness is located, is only a stone's throw from the ocean. Besides, the fact is there are dozens of sightings of the Loch Ness Monsters crossing land.

Transportation in and out of these lakes are not a problem. It is a myth they have been in an enclosed body of water forever or that they have to breed there. The reality is much more complex than this.

Do you give any credence to 'one-off' reports, or do you require numerous, unconnected eye witnesses before you start to take a cryptid contender seriously?

"One-off" must be a UK expression I don't understand. Basically, I think a body of reports are necessary for a cryptozoologist to begin to say this or that pattern points to such and such a cryptid perhaps living here.

What is the most unusual, physically unlikely, but still fairly convincing cryptid that you have ever heard about? I remember John Keel mentioning a report from a London policeman of "a walking pine-cone"...

Keelian reports are another thing altogether, but I guess I don't have any one that I think is more exciting than another. I get stirred up by the report of a new bird in Sumatra or a hairy hominoid in the Himalayas. They all are creatures of wonder for me.

Let's play Hit, Miss, or Maybe... I'll give you a number of cryptids and you give me a likelihood that they actually exist...

Owlman

I really don't have enough first hand information on the Owlman to know, but from the reports I've read, it sounds very fantastic.

Mothman

The Mothman accounts from the 1960s mixed many different kinds of reports. Interestingly, Mark Hall has dug up some reports from 100 years ago of giant unknown owls (which he calls Bighoot) that match one segment of the Mothman accounts. There may be some fire under that smoke.

The Thunderbird

Large teratons seem mildly improbable to many cryptozoologists, but the giant condorlike birds that picked up the Lowe boy seem probable - from my investigations of that case. Looking at the history of Thunderbirds, I think there's something definitely going on here.

The Jersey Devil

This is a catch-all label that does not deal with one cryptid. I can hardly say the "Jersey Devil" exists, as there is no such entity as the "Jersey Devil." There may be Black Panthers and Bigfoot-like creatures roaming New Jersey, but that's another matter, entirely.

The Moa

I did interview the recent eyewitness of a

smaller moa in New Zealand, and moas appear to be around.

"Our own" Beast of Bodmin

Immigrant pumas may be behind most of the UK ABC reports. The jury is still out.

Thylacine (Tasmanian Tiger)

Probably, but perhaps on Australia and New Guinea, and not on Tasmania.

Lastly, would you feel any disappointment if creatures such as Bigfoot or Ogopogo were to be captured, classified and accepted as 'normal, everyday' animals that every kid would read about in their A-Z books? Isn't part of their mystique and attraction the very fact that they are so mysterious?

No, I find the mountain gorilla, okapi, giant squid, coelacanth, and many other former cryptids very exciting. There is nothing normal and everyday about any of these and hundreds of other animals.

Thank-you for your time Loren, and good luck with the musuem!

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 11 July, 2000

7:00pm - 10:00pm

THE THREE CRANES

Queen Street
Sheffield City Centre

MCMINNVILLE UFO PHOTOS SOAR THE GLOBE

By Pat Forgey

(The News-Register, McMinnville, Oregon, May 9, 2000)

Mere days after I gave a brief talk at the May YUFOS meeting on the famed McMinnville photos, the following article appeared in various places on the internet. So, as a kind of sequel to my presentation, and expecting interest from YUFOS readers, I nicked it. And around the same time began a huge and heated debate on UFO-Updates featuring the usual suspects. This one will run and run...and run...and run....zzzzz- Dave Baker)

Fifty years ago, the most important event in human history happened in McMinnville when a local farm couple captured evidence of interplanetary visitors on film.

Or they merely snapped a couple of pictures of a still-secret military craft. Or maybe it was an optical illusion, or a hoax.

Even after 50 years, nobody yet knows what to make of the two photographs taken by Paul and Evelyn Trent a bit after dinner on May 11, 1950. Much has been made of the photographs, nonetheless.

What set the Trents' photographs apart wasn't the timing. They weren't the first photos purporting to show unidentified flying objects, and they've hardly been the last.

"There have been a lot of such events, but this was of particular interest because of the clarity of the photos," said Bruce Maccabee, a researcher who has performed an exhaustive analysis. "Without the photos, it would have been just another sighting by some people, but the Trent case stands out because these photos are so clear that it's either the real thing or a hoax."

Unlikely hoaxers

Beyond the relative clarity of the photos, though, it was the Trents themselves who really set the photos apart.

Both Paul and Evelyn Trent died in the late 1990s. The house where the photographs were taken has long since been torn down.

But the Trents were, by all accounts, simple farm folk. They weren't the sort of people likely to either imagine or make up a flying saucer story, said Maccabee, who spent hours interviewing them over several years while he studied the photographs.

"I basically concluded that they were not the type of people who would attempt a UFO hoax, to say the nothing of pulling one off," he said.

That conclusion was echoed by journalist Bill Powell, who showed the Trent photographs to the world and touched off a media circus decades before that term came into common use.

Working for the *Telephone-Register*, predecessor of the *News-Register*, Powell got word of the photos in June 1950. They had been snapped a month earlier.

There were two of them. Retrieving the negatives from Paul Trent, Powell published them across the top of the *Telephone-Register* and told the Trents' story.

Evelyn Trent had been feeding rabbits in the backyard of their Ballston-area farm when she saw a flying disc in the sky to the northwest. She called for her husband, Paul, who snapped a photograph with his Kodak camera, rewound the film as rapidly as possible, and snapped a second shot 30 seconds later.

Both photos appear to show a disc zipping through the sky.

Paul Trent may have had photos of the biggest news story ever to hit McMinnville, but all he did was put the camera away. Later, after finishing off the roll of film on Mother's Day, he took it to a drug store on McMinnville's Third Street to be developed.

"The reason I thought they were authentic was that the negatives were in the middle of the roll," said Powell from his retirement home in Idaho Falls, Idaho. "He'd taken some more pictures so that he'd make sure he got his money's worth when he developed the things." Maccabee said that story is part of why the photographs have taken on such importance in

the UFO movement. If the Trents had been trying to fake a photograph, they'd likely have taken several practice shots and shown the world only the best of what they ended up with.

The other thing that makes the photos believable is that the Trents didn't seem to be trying to take advantage of them.

The day Paul Trent got the film developed, he told banker Ralph Wortman about it. Wortman mentioned it to *Telephone-Register* Editor Phil Bladine, who dispatched Powell to investigate. Photos go national

Once the photos were published, however, they touched a national nerve.

Several supposed UFO sightings, usually called flying saucers then, had recently made the news. The photos went out on the wires and were reprinted across the nation.

Life, then the nation's top circulation magazine, published them in July.

Mutual Broadcasting System radio personality Frank Edwards obtained a copy of the *Telephone-Register* and called Bladine.

"Your paper is 10 cents," Edwards said to Bladine. "Can I tell people that if they send you a dime, you'll send 'em a copy?"

"I said 'sure', figuring that we might get a request for three or four papers," Bladine recalled.

Instead, requests flooded in. Dimes came taped to cards and wrapped in paper.

Sometimes payment was made in stamps. Sometimes dollar bills were sent and multiple copies were requested.

The *Telephone Register's* headline the next week reported, "Saucers Top Story in U.S. Inquiries Flood TR office."

At the time, the paper's circulation was less than 4,000, Bladine guesses. But by the end of week, requests for an extra 2,000 copies had come in.

That led to a special reprinting of the front page on high quality paper. By late summer, most of a special press run of 10,000 copies had been mailed out to people in all 48 states, the District of Columbia and Canada.

Bladine said many of the people contacting the paper had stories to tell. "People said that they'd seen a flying saucer, but didn't want to tell anyone because they were afraid they'd be thought nuts."

The Trents were eventually invited to New York for a radio appearance.

The photos have been reprinted many times since. They were included in the Condon Report, a University of Colorado study conducted into UFO sightings on behalf of the U.S. Air Force.

Before *Life* published the photographs, they were cropped by someone. Nothing but the cropped versions have been published since, said Tim Hills, a McMenamins historian who researched the photos as part of a look at the area's history when the pub chain reopened Hotel Oregon in McMinnville.

"The Telephone Register is the only source of the full-frame photos," he said. "They were never published full-frame ever again."

Skeptics abound

UFO skeptics have challenged the photos' authenticity, saying the story the Trents told of how the photos came to be taken was inconsistent. Maccabee, who interviewed the Trents many times, said he didn't find the inconsistencies significant.

"If they had said exactly the same thing every time, they (skeptics) would have said it was a hoax because they'd memorized it," he said. "You can't win with that one."

Other critics have said the shadows in the pictures indicate the photos were taken in the morning, rather than evening as the Trents said, but no one has come up with an explanation for why they'd lie about an insignificant element like that.

Hills finds the Trents and their story credible, even after the variations of multiple tellings.

"Their stories really didn't change significantly," he said. "It's a credit to them, and bolsters their credibility."

That doesn't mean that it's not a hoax of some sort, he said. But it's stood up for five decades. "If it is a fake it's a masterful one," he said.

Maccabee said he's convinced of the photos' authenticity. What he doesn't know is what Paul Trent snapped a picture of that day in 1950. Trent himself thought it was some type of secret military plane, Maccabee said.

He was reluctant at first to even let the newspaper publish the photos. He was quoted in the first story as saying, "I'm afraid I'll get into trouble with the government."

Hills is among those who doesn't think it was a top secret Air Force project.

"If we had the capability in 1947 to make a flying saucer, we should be able to do that today, and we can't. It's a big question mark to me," he said.

Powell still doesn't know what to make of it. The story he published carried the headline, "At Long Last – Authentic Photographs of Flying Saucer [?]"

Powell said it should be read carefully.

"You'll notice that on my screamer, I put a question mark," he said. "I was covering my butt a little bit."

Hills said he may not be able to explain it, but he knows one thing. "It's a great story."

BALL LIGHTNING SUSPECTED IN KITCHEN MISCHIEF

John Switzer

(The Columbus Dispatch, April 22, 2000)

Earlier this month, while a thunderstorm was hammering Upper Arlington about 4:20 one afternoon, some people saw strange balls of fire floating through the air.

Afterward, Emma McClenaghan called me, wondering whether what she had seen was ball lightning.

"I was sitting in a chair in the family room when I heard thunder," McClenaghan said. "I turned around and in my kitchen I saw the big ball of flame."

After a short while it disappeared. "It took out three phones, the garage door opener and the light in my oven," she said.

"A neighbor behind me saw the ball drifting down Lane Avenue. The woman next door saw one in her house.

"In back of me they had quite of bit of damage" to an awning, doormat and the electrical system.

Those neighbors thought the lightning left the house by way of a dog chain attached to the building and then stripped some bark off a tree.

Other neighbors had problems with their computers after the storm.

The Handy Weather Answer Book says: "Ball lightning is one of nature's most mysterious phenomena. Usually seen during violent thunderstorms, the spheres of glowing light are typically the size of bowling balls or basketballs.

"They can last from a few seconds to many minutes. The spheres can simply vanish into thin air, but can also pass through window glass and screens, leaving burn marks behind.

"Not every scientist is convinced the phenomenon even exists. But there are numerous credible reports of balls of fire floating through the air, often after nearby lightning strikes. They usually do not cause much damage and even seem playful. They have been known to roll down the aisles of airliners or pass through an open window into a startled resident's bedroom." Ken Reeves, a meteorologist for AccuWeather, said he believes strange things can happen during intense lightning strikes.

Whether the effect is ball lightning or not, he cannot say. "The way the electric impulses can dance or move can give many illusions, one of which is what a number of people refer to as ball lightning," he said.

"I've never seen it myself, but it's hard to doubt the description of those who have seen something."

GHOSTS? – I SHOULD SAY SO.

By Andrew Ashmore

Within days of sending out last month's issue of PRB, including the editorial "Ch-ch-ch-changes!" I received the following article by long-time contributor Andy, racing to the rescue with a none-UFO based article...enjoy- DB

What is a ghost? Is it something you see? Is it something you hear? Is it something you touch? Or could it even be something you smell; a familiar odour that was once synonymous with person that was near to you?

It all started with the sad death through cancer of my grandmother in December 1983 – a fatality that would probably have been preventable in this day and age.

I was a mere lad of eighteen years and had not experienced anything like that before – the passing of someone close. It was hard to take but at the same time quite a relief.

My grandfather coped well with it all and my mother would visit him every Saturday and clean around the house while she was there.

It wasn't until several years later that she talked of being able to smell my grandmother's perfume or face cream odour around the area of the bed where she had spent her last days. An unmistakable scent that years of living with a person would bring to mind.

The fact that the perfumes and such had long since been removed made it all the more puzzling. And the fact that the aroma was only detectable on certain occasions and not every week made the whole episode very strange, particularly when even a change of bed altered nothing.

I even remember myself visiting the house and whilst 'spending a penny' thought that there was someone behind me! Alas, that was probably over-imagination on my part as it was only a week or two after her demise.

The strangest thing was to happen only last year with the passing of my grandfather, in my view due to the lack of care in the NHS, (legalised murder I call it).

The house and its contents needed sorting out and selling and after much endeavour a date was fixed to have the stuff moved out.

Quite by chance myself and several other members of the family had the idea to have one last Boxing Day party there, as we used to "in the old days". A time to have everyone together like we used to...ah, those comforting time when life wasn't such a hassle!

But being that nostalgia isn't what it used to be the whole thing turned weird when my uncle told my mother that that he could smell that aroma, one that he had experienced before, and one which he swears is the perfume or such that my grandmother always wore.

This time, it was detectable in the kitchen just before we were about to leave.

My mother did not know that my uncle had undergone the same acquaintance as herself until he told her that night. He had been reluctant to say anything because of possible ridicule.

I suppose anyone could say that due to the location and in the last incident – the circumstances – that it could all be in the imagination. After all I can remember smells from my childhood – no, not that sort of scent(!), but things like Golden Nuggets, Trebor Fruit Salads etc...

Familiarity provokes memories perhaps even in our sense of smell, possibly even subconsciously.

Nothing was ever seen. Nothing was ever heard. Only this apparently 'unmistakable' waft of a beauty product which was consistently used by my nan.

Imaginateness? Fantasy? Or perhaps something alien to our understanding? Subconscious images materialising as something conscious to us?

Or perhaps ghosts?

I wonder.....

FATIMA SECRET FORETOLD POPE SHOOTING, VATICAN SAYS

By Philip Pullella (Reuters)

FATIMA, Portugal, May 13 (Reuters) - The Vatican said on Saturday the "Third Secret of Fatima" included prophecies of the the assassination attempt on Pope John Paul and persecution of Christians in the 20th century by communist regimes.

The Pope's top aide, addressing a huge crowd in Portugal on the 19th anniversary of the shooting in Rome, also said the Vatican would publish the entire text of the secret after "appropriate" preparation for the faithful.

The secret has intrigued the world for more than 80 years.

Secretary of State Cardinal Angelo Sodano announced the decision to hundreds of thousands of people at a mass where the Pope beatified two of the three shepherd children said to have seen Madonna at Fatima in 1917 and received her message.

Over the years, the Vatican's refusal to make it public has inspired books, doomsday cults convinced that it predicted the end of the world and even a hijacking by a man who demanded that the Vatican reveal it.

Sodano said the "vision of Fatima" concerned events in the 20th century, including the "war waged by atheist systems against the Church" and the "immense suffering" of Christians and the Popes in the last century of the second millennium.

Turkish gunman Mehmet Ali Agca shot and nearly killed the Pope in St Peter's Square in 1981, a time when events in the Pope's Polish homeland were starting the domino effect that would lead to the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe.

Sodano said the third part of the secret -- the first two are already well known -- involved a vision of martyrdom and suffering, including a "bishop clothed in white" who "makes his way with great effort towards the Cross amid the corpses of those who were martyred. He too falls to the ground, apparently dead, under a burst of gunfire."

The cardinal said that after the assassination attempt "it appeared evident to His Holiness that it was a motherly hand which guided the bullet's path, enabling the dying Pope to halt at the threshold of death."

Papal survival after shooting linked to third secret

"This protection (of the Madonna at the time of the assassination attempt) seems also to be linked to the so-called 'third part' of the secret of Fatima," Sodano said.

In order for the faithful to better receive the message of the Madonna, the Pope had ordered the Vatican doctrinal department, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, to "(make) public the third part of the secret, after the preparation of an appropriate commentary."

Sodano said that since the secret contained a "prophetic vision" similar to those in the Gospel and condensed events spread over time, it "must be interpreted in a symbolic key".

There was no indication when the text and the commentary would be published.

Sodano said that even if events referred to in the Secret of Fatima "now seem part of the past" and atheist regimes had fallen in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in 1989, attacks on the Church and Christians "tragically continue".

"Our Lady's call to conversion and penance, issued at the beginning of the 20th century, remains timely and urgent today."

The Pope himself had set the scene for the revelation of the secret earlier in his homily during the mass in which he put the two shepherd children on the road to sainthood.

Pope calls for return to traditional values

He said modern society had to return to

traditional values if it wanted to avoid self-destruction.

The beatification ceremony, in which Francisco and Jacinta Marto were declared "blesseds" of the Church, was attended by Sister Lucia dos Santos, a frail, 93-year-old nun who is the only survivor of the three visionaries.

The Pope met Sister Lucia before the mass.

"The message of Fatima is a call to conversion, appealing to humanity so that it does not fall into the (devil's) trap," the Pope said, adding that a struggle between good and evil was still in progress today.

"Man, by putting God to the side, cannot reach happiness. He will only end up destroying himself," the 79-year-old Pope, who wore resplendent gold and white vestments and

appeared to be in good form despite his shaky health, told the crowd.

The first part of the Madonna's message was a vision of hell shown to the children.

In the second part, Mary predicted the outbreak of World War Two some 22 years before it started, asked for devotion to her Immaculate Heart and asked that Russia, which was about to undergo the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, be consecrated to her.

Otherwise, the Madonna is said to have told the children, to whom she appeared each month from May to October 1917, that Russia, about to become the Soviet Union, would "spread her errors" in the world and the Pope would suffer much.

FORUM

"WHERE HAVE ALL THE UFOs GONE?"

Andrew Ashmore

What's going on? Only a year or two ago we were being inundated with television programmes, books, magazines and radio phone-ins about the weird and wonderful world of UFOs.

I thought that the onslaught of information was never going to end – spoilt for choice we were....and then all of a sudden....nothing. Nowt. Zero. Zilch. Well, just about bugger all anyway.

Whatever happened to our regular weekly fix of *SIGHTINGS?* (It was cancelled by U.S. Networks a couple of years ago – Ed.) What about all those inane shows like the one presented by Jonathan Woss – yes, remember that show – light entertainment masquerading as a serious look at ufology.

I wonder indeed if the magazine *Alien Encounters* is still published. (No – Ed) I wouldn't know because I haven't bought it for a few years, but I wouldn't be surprised if this somewhat sensationalist printing was now defunct. After all, the editor seemed to change with alarming regularity so they must have had

problems. I was reminded of this sudden fall in this subjects' popularity by the editorial in last month's PRB, written by our very own master of ceremonies Dave Baker.

In it he touched on many things, for example the lack of interest by book companies to issue new material to what is obviously becoming a dwindling audience.

Apparently some of these once astute followers have now diverted their attention to fresh pastures in the form of ancient earth mysteries and new age crystals! Bloody traitors I say! Although to be fair, a lot of folk are affected by other mystical subjects at the same time, but that's no reason to turn your back on on what to me is the biggest and best of the bunch.

Sadly, for now the chances of things picking up are about as likely as finding William Hague in bed with Ffion! (who's William Hague, the audience ask...)

Dave, our leader, says that the topics covered by our mag have to become a little more diverse than usual so that we can still

accommodate the same number of pages and not 'cop-out' by making the magazine shorter. This is just fine by me just as long as we don't go down the road of discussing whether Elvis is really dead or who actually shot Kennedy. (By the way, why do all Elvis impersonators do him from his early '70s era with white jump-suit. Chrome-rimmed glasses and always say "Thanyou verrr merrch"?)

Getting back to my original topic, I'd just like to know where the whole darn thing is going if indeed it has a future.

There are some things I know that I will never say, such as that Steps are a seriously good pop group, or that Joe Pasquale is very funny. But I'd never thought the day would come when I'd say that I was becoming a little disillusioned with ufology, partly because of the lack of media showing on the subject, and partly because I am more sceptical than I used to be.

I honestly believe that it used to be more fun when I was a bit of an alien-freak than now, with my more questioning attitude.

But if we all jack it all in now we will never find out anything more so I'm afraid we'll have to take the harder option and continue to soldier on as best we can.

The UFOs are still out there, it is just that there are less mis-identifications due to over-zealous witnesses fuelled by high-profile TV programmes on the subject.

All these things go hand-in-hand and exaggerate the true numbers of genuine events so we shouldn't be put off merely because we haven't heard anything of note for a while.

Maybe when the next development does occur it will be a big one. Then we will all be glad we stuck at it because it will be worth the wait.

Andy Ashmore

EDITOR'S REPLY

Okay. Although I *think* Andy is agreeing with the points I raised in my editorial, I shall go over a few points just to make it clear.

The primary reason that I suggested that PRB as a magazine extended its scope of interest

was to keep the magazine 20 A4 pages long per month.

However, and this is the major point I was trying to make, finding 20 A4 pages of *decent* UFO related material per month, is almost impossible.

Of course I could publish a 50 page monthly if all I did was print badly-written, unsubstantiated garbage from the Internet, but that isn't what PRB is all about. We produce our own badly-written un-substantiated garbage, thank you very much.

But seriously...

It's quite simply a case of what can we write about if nothing is happening? That's why I have never penned the pamphlet, *Truths Jeffrey Archer Has Told...* there just isn't enough material.

Sure, two years ago UFOs appeared on more TV programmes than Barbra Windsor, but I'm afraid that's all in the past. UFO sightings do go in waves and troughs, and I'm afraid that we are in such a trough right now.

Now why that may be is another thing entirely. Weird things could be buzzing over our heads all the time, but if no-one is bothering to look up as they go around their daily and nightly grind, no-one's gonna see 'em. Media interest is certainly a part of all this, as Andy says.

Or maybe the Reticulans are all "doing something else" and not visiting us. Who knows?

Incidentally, I have two cases in this issue which YUFOS have followed up, but they are the first in a long time. Quite simply, if no-one calls to report a UFO, we can't go out and investigate them, and consequently write a case report for PRB. Andy Roberts touched upon the same subject in his YUFOS interview, when he asked where all the 'good' UFO case reports were these days. And he wasn't just referring to YUFOS, but all UFO groups and independent researchers.

So, as many members already have an interest in other aspects of the so-called paranormal, it seems a natural step to broaden our scope to include these subjects.

But in no way are we being 'put off', or 'jacking it in'. And as we are unlikely to go out investigating claims of Yetis in the Peak District or Sauropods in the River Don, any UFO reports we do receive will certainly be followed up...

FROM AROUND THE WORLD... AND BEYOND!!!

AUSTRALIAN CLONE WORK TARGETS ENDANGERED SPECIES

By Paul Tait

(Science Headlines, Thursday May 11, 2000)

SYDNEY (Reuters) - Australian scientists said on Thursday they were working on a pilot cloning project to help preserve endangered species but cast doubt on efforts to recreate the extinct Tasmanian tiger.

Professor Alan Trounson said his small team at Melbourne's Monash Institute of Reproduction and Development had been taking skin samples from the endangered northern hairy-nosed wombat for the past year in a cloning project to regenerate the species.

"I think the benefit to endangered species is absolutely phenomenal," Trounson told Reuters.

"I think if we could prove this with the wombat, this would be a model that could be used for many other species," he said. Trounson said there were only 80 of the northern wombats left in their natural habitat in Queensland state. The northern wombat is a close relative of the common wombat, a burrowing mammal so numerous in some parts of Australia that it is considered a pest.

Australia has announced two cloning breakthroughs in the past week by creating a cloned merino sheep and a cloned calf using technology similar to that used to produce Dolly, the world's first cloned sheep, in Scotland three years ago.

Ambitious Project

Last week the Australian Museum announced a more ambitious program to try to recreate the Tasmanian tiger, a marsupial wolf believed to have died out in 1936.

The museum said it extracted high-quality DNA from heart and liver samples from a Tasmanian tiger pup preserved since 1866 and hopes to generate a cell from that to be used in reproduction.

"While there are similar extinct animal cloning projects elsewhere in the world, the Australian Museum's project is the first to find good quality DNA," the museum's professor Michael Archer said. DNA is a unique genetic fingerprint and it is the molecule which transmits hereditary characteristics.

But Trounson doubted the Tasmanian tiger project would be a success because there were no species remotely close enough to act as surrogates and because taking DNA still did not guarantee a healthy cell could be generated to use for reproduction.

"You can clone the DNA but that doesn't get you a cell that you could use for getting an animal," he said. "The chance of doing anything with an extinct animal like that is so close to zero that you couldn't compute it."

Major Concerns

There were also major concerns that the habitat to sustain viable numbers of extinct species no longer existed. This was not necessarily the case with endangered animals, he said.

"It's absolutely crucial to preserve habitats, but also animal populations as much as we can," Trounson said. Australia's GeneEthics Network also warned against trying to recreate extinct species.

"You would just have an animal that wouldn't have a mate and that would just live out its life in a zoo," GeneEthics director Bob Phelps told Reuters.

Trounson said established cells taken from the wombat skin samples had been frozen. His team hopes to use the common wombat as a surrogate for the cell nucleus and to carry the embryo to term.

Australia's cloned sheep and calf were created by fusing cultured cells with an unfertilized egg. Cloning cells for reproduction was less invasive than taking sperm and eggs for artificial insemination, Trounson said.

MOST DETAILED IMAGES EVER OF TOP-SECRET U.S. AIR BASE SHOW MAJOR EXPANSION

(By Mary Motta Senior Business Correspondent ,23 April 2000)

Detailed images of Area 51 released Sunday may not show evidence of little green men, but they do show that the super-secret Air Force base has grown significantly over the years.

"I want to see flying saucers as much as anyone," said Federation of American Scientist's John Pike, who ordered the 1-meter (3.2-foot) images, the most detailed to date, from Thorton, Colorado-company Space Imaging. Instead, the photos -- captured over the past few months -- show that the area has significantly expanded since the first images were snapped of the infamous site over 30 years ago.

"It's interesting to contemplate what is going on there. It seems as though there is tons of money going in there and nothing is going out," he said.

In particular, the photos show a runway that is about 3,800 meters (2.36 miles), or about 42 football fields, long. That's even longer than the runways for the world's largest commercial aircraft.

The images also show a burgeoning growth in the area, including a complete rebuilding and expansion in size of the housing complex for base personnel over the past 30 years. In addition, there are new support facilities.

A geometrically-shaped munitions storage area is also identified.

And four aircraft hangars are visible off the runway. Conspiracy theorists have long believed that one of these hangars, dubbed Hangar 18, is the holding area for the alien bodies and captured alien technology taken from crash sites.

These high-resolution images, captured by Space Imaging's IKONOS satellite on April 2, were released less than a week after Raleigh,

North Carolina-based Aerial Images unfolded its series of 6.6-foot (2-meter) photos of the mysteriously secretive area over the Web, crashing the site for days.

Though the public's ravenous appetite for these images was made obvious this past week, Pike's purpose for getting these photos was different.

Pike said the request was a test to see how long it would take to gain access to these images and how they may be used by military agencies around the world.

"This is an interesting case study that enables us to explore in practical rather than theoretical terms just what is this 'Brave New World' we've entered into."

This so-called 3.3-foot (1-meter) resolution technology once was available only to intelligence agencies through their own spy satellites. But it has been estimated that by the year 2003, at least 11 companies in five countries will have high-resolution, remote-sensing cameras in orbit.

That sort of commercial technology in space worries government officials because they believe such detailed imagery could encourage industrial espionage, terrorism or more cross-border military attacks in the developing world.

But Pike seemed unfazed by the impact of this imagery on national security.

Because it took 2 months to get the images, he said the technology would only be useful during peacetime for monitoring specific regions instead of during wartime, when the military may need to target a strategic area.

"The war may already be over before you get your picture," Pike said.

Space Imaging's Mark Brender argued that obtaining images doesn't always take so long.

"We can turn stuff around in 24 hours," he said. When twin tornadoes touched down in Texas on March 28, for example, Brender says that within a few hours they were evaluating the images and ready to release them to the public within 24 hours.

"We can produce images very shortly for natural disasters and crisis," he said.

Area 51 -- 75 miles (121 kilometers) northwest of Las Vegas - occupies about 150 square miles (390 square kilometers) of a dried up lakebed in the Great Basin Desert, Nevada. It was named after the grid it occupies on an old Nevada map and came into existence in 1955 when aerospace company Lockheed Martin Steven L. Wilson, Sr. landed there to test the U 2, a high-altitude surveillance plane.

The top-secret base later became a proving ground for several generations of high-tech prototypes, including the F 117-A Stealth fighter.

The shroud of secrecy thickened once the Air Force bought up about 9,000 acres of land around the base to prevent the public from getting too close. In August 1994, an Air Force official admitted the base existed, saying the Air Force has "facilities within the complex near the dry lakebed of Groom Lake - used for testing, training technologies, operations and systems critical to the effectiveness of U.S. military forces."

Ufologists have long believed that unidentified flying objects from other planets are entrenched in underground bases in the region and insist alien autopsies are being conducted there. But, conventional wisdom says the base is likely a centre for super-secret operations dealing with sophisticated military aircraft.

Did Pike ever believe that his request would produce evidence of the existence of aliens?

"No! I think all that [extraterrestrial] stuff is being done out of that CIA facility in Ohio," he said laughing.¹

2 MILLION DOWNLOAD SETI SCREEN SAVER

May 18, 2000

More than 2 million home computers have been enlisted in a search for extraterrestrial intelligence, using a screen saving program that crunches astronomical data from the Internet, according to organisers of the undertaking.

Celebrating the first anniversary of the project on Thursday, the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) organisation called it "the

largest distributed computing experiment ever."

The innovative application uses spare computer power of personal computers to analyse scientific data from the radio telescope at Arecibo, Puerto Rico.

Participants have logged 280,000 years worth of computing time, said the Planetary Society, which co-sponsors the SETI@home project with the University of California, Berkeley.

Should a SETI@home computer ever detect an alien signal, its user will "merit a place in the history books as one of the humans who opened the door to an incredible new view of the cosmos,"² the society said.

Those wanting to join in the search should go to one of the following Web sites:

<http://planetary.org> or

<http://setiathome.berkeley.edu>

ASTRONOMERS FIND EVIDENCE OF EIGHT OBJECTS ORBITING DISTANT STARS

May 9, 2000

WASHINGTON (AP) -- European astronomers say they have found evidence of eight planet-like objects orbiting distant stars, bringing to 43 the number of extra-solar system planets that have been found.

An astronomy team from the Geneva Observatory reported finding six planet-sized objects and two more massive objects orbiting stars up to 140 light years away from Earth.

The planets range in size from a mass slightly less than Saturn, to about 15 times more massive than Jupiter.

Jupiter is about 317 times more massive than the Earth and Saturn is about 95 times more massive.

Two of the new extra solar system objects are large enough to be classified as brown dwarfs. Brown dwarfs are thought to be "failed stars,"

² Although more likely be paid a midnight visit from Gary Busey or that Vietnamese bloke who's always in things like Die Hard, with a silenced Browning or garrote, to shut them up. Or something. As they do...

¹ He's a card, he is.-Ed

bodies that are bigger than planets but without the mass needed to start burning like a star.

Extra solar system planets are discovered by measuring the motion of the host stars. The gravitational tug of a companion object causes a central star to wobble slightly. By measuring this motion, astronomers can determine the mass of a planet-like body and its distance from the central star.

A light year is the distance light travels in a year in space, about 6 trillion miles (10 trillion kilometers).

The first extra solar system planet, or exoplanet, was found in 1995, and astronomers at centers in Europe and in the United States have been steadily adding new discoveries ever since.

FRENCH MILITARY STUDY SAYS UFOs ARE "CRAFT OF EXTRATERRESTRIAL ORIGIN"

High-ranking French officials—including retired generals from the Institute of Higher Studies for National Defense, a government-financed strategic planning agency—recently took a giant step by openly challenging skepticism about UFOs.

In a report based on a three-year study, they concluded that “numerous manifestations observed by reliable witnesses could be the work of craft of extraterrestrial origin.” In fact, they said the best explanation is “the extraterrestrial hypothesis.”

The French group reached that conclusion after examining nearly 500 international aeronautical sightings, radar/visual cases and previously undisclosed pilots' reports. They drew on data from official sources, government authorities and the air forces of other countries.

The findings are contained in a 90-page report titled *'UFOs and Defense: What Should We Prepare For?'*

“The number of sightings which are completely unexplained despite the abundance and quality of data from them, is growing throughout the world,” the team declared.

The authors note that about 5 percent of

sightings on which there is solid documentation cannot be easily attributed to earthly sources, such as secret military exercises. This 5 percent “seem to be completely unknown flying machines with exceptional performances that are guided by a natural or an artificial intelligence,” they say. Moreover, the report says, science has developed models for travel from another solar system and for technology that could be used to propel the vehicles.

The French study assures readers that UFOs have demonstrated no hostile acts, “although intimidation maneuvers have been confirmed.”

The study's originators are four-star General Bernard Noriain, former commander of the French Tactical Air Force and military counselor to the prime minister; General Denis Letty, a French Air Force fighter pilot; and Andre LeBeau, former head of National Center for Space Studies, the French equivalent of NASA.

They formed a 12-member 'Committee for In-Depth Studies,' which wrote the report. Other contributors included a three-star admiral, the national chief of police and the head of a government agency studying the subject, as well as scientists and weapons engineers.

Not only does the group stand by its findings, it is urging international action. They suggest that the European Union undertake diplomatic action with the United States, “exerting useful pressure to clarify this crucial issue, which must fall within the scope of political and strategic alliances.”

Why might the United States be interested—albeit, privately—in a subject often met with ridicule?

For one thing, declassified U.S. government documents show that unexplained objects with extraordinary technical capabilities pose challenges to military activities worldwide.

For example, U.S. fighter jets have attempted to pursue UFOs, according to North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) logs and Air Force documents.

Further, the French report says there have “visits above secret installations and missile bases” and “military aircraft shadowed” in the United States.”

(UFO Roundup, Vol 5, no.22, Joe Trainor)

SCIENTISTS DEBATE THE PARANORMAL

May 23, 2000

Frequently criticized for ignoring and debunking paranormal phenomenon, at least some scientists are elevating the discussion of the unexplained. Approximately 50 scientists and academics met recently at Cambridge University to explore the possibilities that paranormal experience may have basis in fact.

The university conference brought together scientists from disciplines that included physicists, psychologists, psychiatrists, physiologists, and astronomers, some of whom described themselves as open skeptics on paranormal occurrence.

"Most readers of *Physics World* will probably dismiss paranormal phenomena as either utter nonsense or not worthy of serious study, but over the years the subject has attracted the interest of a number of eminent physicists. Lord Rayleigh, J J Thomson and Oliver Lodge, for example, were all early members of the Society for Psychical Research, which was founded in 1882 by fellows of Trinity College to study "those faculties of Man, real or supposed, which appear to be inexplicable on any generally recognized hypothesis," said the magazine in a report on the conference.

"The question of whether paranormal phenomena actually exist probably divides educated members of modern Western civilization as sharply as any other single issue. If it is true that the human brain can receive messages and control things in ways that cannot be explained normally, then this undermines the belief of most scientists and runs contrary to the belief of most of us who actually investigate the brain," said Horace Barlow, a Cambridge physiologist. Still, Barlow said no progress will be made on the issue unless scientists keep an open mind to accept the possibility of these phenomena.

Delegates said scientific study of paranormal events such as appearances of ghosts, alien abductions, and psychokinesis are difficult to study because of the lack of evidence and

difficulty of reproducing the events in a lab or controlled conditions.

Cosmologist Bernard Carr, who organized the meeting, identified paranormal phenomena in three categories. First, he said, there are "pseudo-psychic phenomena", such as a poltergeist. "These phenomena are not really psychic, but are often misinterpreted as such," Carr said, adding that physical explanations can sometimes be found.

Second, there are phenomena—such as out-of-body and near-death experiences, hypnosis and apparitions—that may be entirely within the mind and do not necessarily involve any interaction with the physical world. "No doubt, people have these experiences," says Carr, "but the question is how do we interpret them? Do they correspond to some form of higher-order reality, or are they just illusions? It would be easy to dismiss ghosts, for example, as no more than visual hallucinations, but sometimes apparitions are shared by more than one person or contain information about the real world, which makes them more interesting."

The third type of paranormal phenomenon involves the direct interaction of the mind with the physical world, including telepathy, extrasensory perception and "psychokinesis".

One example of the latter effect was given at the meeting by Fotini Pallikari, a physicist from the University of Athens in Greece, said the magazine. She has analyzed data from a group of German psychologists, who tried to see if people can influence supposedly random physical processes. The psychologists used electronic "noise" from a semiconductor diode, which consisted of a series of random positive and negative pulses that were digitized as 0 and 1. The signals were fed into a computer, and people were then asked to mentally "influence" the statistical distribution of millions of such bits.

But although conventional statistics found that the operators had no influence on the average, long-term statistical analysis, gave a different picture, said the magazine. "It appeared to

NASA TO ANALYSE CANARY ISLANDS 'UFO' VIDEO

BY DR. DAVID CLARKE

NASA is to study a film showing a brilliant fireball captured on camcorder by a witness from Yorkshire, UK, during a visit to Gran Canaria in 1997. The witness, who runs a business in the Spanish-owned Canary Islands, provided UFOIN with a copy of the footage for expert analysis.

Scores of people across the Canaries reported seeing a 'fireball' move slowly across the night sky, following a north south trajectory, around 0130 UTC on 21 November 1997. UFOlogist Vicente-Juan Ballester-Olmos has collected a number of these accounts, including sketches made by witnesses of this and other fireball phenomena reported during a four-day period. Spanish astronomers suggested these observations might have been caused by a spectacular display of bolide meteors.

The Yorkshire witness saw the 'fireball' appear overhead around 0130 UTC as he relaxed with his partner in a chalet overlooking the Atlantic Ocean in the resort of Puerto Rico (Long 015° 43'W, Lat 027° 51'N). The object was visible long enough for him to fetch his Panasonic camcorder, allowing him to focus and utilise the maximum digital zoom extension before it disappeared from view out to sea. The 'UFO' was completely silent throughout the observation, and appears as a light source with a trailing tale. A smaller, detached light source is visible towards the lower right of the main 'object' which analysis suggested may have been an optical artefact within the lens system. At one point the luminous object appears to "explode", and reappears seconds later having apparently changed shape.

Between 20 and 30 seconds of VHS footage was obtained. Unfortunately, there are no points of reference, and no means of estimating size, speed or distance from the witness, but analysis suggests that the image area represents an angle of view between 1.5 and 2 degrees. Although the object does appear to change shape in the video, there is insufficient data to confirm this was actually the case and analysis suggests the "explosion" was a result of a loss of autofocus on a bright source of light rather than a real physical event. The tape starts abruptly with the object in view, then finishes with its disappearance. The weather conditions were

reported to be clear and calm at the time of the sighting.

Possible explanations initially considered by the UFOIN team included a bolide meteor or the launch of a sea-to-air ballistic missile. Sea launches of prototype missiles by the US Navy are known to have been the source of several UFO reports from the Canaries in the past, including a spectacular photographic case from 1977.

Investigations by photo analyst Bill Rose and inquiries into US Navy deployment records ruled out a missile test as a likely explanation, taking into account the lack of evidence and the likely trajectory of the object reported. The possibility of a meteor fireball was dismissed because of the long duration of the sighting. Bill concluded: "In my opinion this makes the re-entry of space junk or the de-orbit of a satellite the best candidate."

As a result UFOIN, with the help of the photographic analyst, colleagues at the British Astronomical Association and space scientists has been able to positively identify the 'UFO' as the re-entry of a piece of man-made space debris, 'Resurs F1M Soyuz U-r.' This Russian-built rocket was in final orbit at precisely the time of the sighting reported in the early hours of 21 November 1997. Satellite data published by NASA and the Harvard-Smithsonian Satellite Catalogue revealed the final track of the rocket has it moving from north to south over the western edge of Gran Canaria at 0125 UTC, reaching the equator by 0130 UTC.

There can be little doubt that the object captured on video film by the Yorkshire witness, and the luminous phenomena witnessed by numerous residents of the Canary Islands early on 21 November 1997, was the final minutes of the Russian rocket as it disintegrated over the Atlantic Ocean.

The findings of the UFOIN team investigation, and a copy of the VHS video footage, have now been forwarded to Dr Nicholas Johnson of the NASA Space Debris Program for comments and additional analysis.
Investigation by: David Clarke, David Sankey, Gary Anthony, Bill Rose.

BLACK TRIANGLE "LANDS" IN GRENOSIDE

Location: Nether Lane, Ecclesfield,
Sheffield, South Yorkshire.

Date: July/August 1998 (?)

Time: 9:00pm/9:15pm

Investigation by: Dave Baker/Lester
Wainwright

The case: The witness and his neighbour were standing outside in the neighbour's garden after painting a fence. It was a calm, windless evening, half an hour or so before dusk.

The witness, Mr.F, suddenly became aware of some movement in his peripheral vision, and turned to look into the sky.

He saw a dark shape at what appeared to be a great altitude, which he at first assumed was a bird. As he watched, however, the 'thing' came closer, and he realised that it was much too large to be a bird.

As it grew closer, the object picked up speed until it was moving on an east to west trajectory "at a fair old lick" and the witness could see the object more clearly. It appeared to be a dark equilateral triangle, which Mr.F considered could be a hang-glider or a micro-light, purely from the general shape.

As they watched though, the object suddenly tipped its pointed end, or "nose" down at a sharp angle, and began to descend, still at a high speed.

Its angle and speed was so great in fact that Mr.F thought that "Whatever it was, it was going to crash."

It passed them by on their left-hand side, and headed, still descending, towards a bank of trees across fields beyond the end of the garden, some distance away.

By now, the witnesses could tell that it was not, in their opinion, a hang-glider or micro-light as apart from the triangular shape, there were no engines, no pilot hanging below the canopy, no sound, and no recognisable features whatsoever.

The object's colour had now started to move from black to silver. At least, Mr.F. said that he could not tell if the object was revolving and showing first a black upper then a silver underside, or if it was actually changing colour, or even if it was flashing silvery lights.

As the triangle reached a point just above the trees, it slowed whilst still in its "dive", until it levelled out and passed above a cottage across the fields from their position. The triangle then hovered for a moment by a large, rounded tree. It then moved from left to right *horizontally* without tipping or banking, and finally dropped out of sight behind the trees.

The men watched for another ten minutes or so before going inside.

Using the tree for comparison, which is quite noticeable from the garden, Mr.F. judged that the object was "about the size of a small car."

Perhaps strangely, the men did not think to drive or walk down to the area the triangle had appeared to "land", even though these fields are only a short distance away. (*We checked this area ourselves.*)

It also seems unusual that after such a strange sighting, the men should turn their backs on the situation and retire indoors, although this sort of behaviour is quite common in witnesses to unusual phenomenon.

This witness was actually already known to me, as he attended the Andy Roberts Berwyn Mountains lecture back in January 1999. He told his story at the meeting, and his story was exactly the same then as it was when we spoke, both at length on the telephone, and then in our follow-up investigation.

Conclusions

I have no doubt that Mr.F is telling the truth as he sees it, as his story remains the same over repeated tellings. A neighbour joined us while we spoke, and seemed well aware of the sighting, co-oberating details given to us by Mr.F. However, it is of course possible that this could have been 'set up', but I do not think so.

Both myself and Lester agree that it is likely that the object was a hang-glider or micro-lite, although it is impossible to check this out for certain when we cannot narrow the date down to a reasonable window.

"MYSTERY AIRCRAFT" IN ROTHERHAM

Location: Morthern Road, Wickersley, Rotherham

Date: April 30, 2000

Time: 2:00am

The witness was at his home in Morthern Road, Wickersley, Rotherham, unable to sleep and watching a late film.

He became aware of a low droning sound, which he at first thought was on the TV. After muting the sound however, he realised that the droning sound was only increasing in volume.

Thinking straight away that it was an aircraft, he thought it unusual to hear one so late at night, and, from the sound, obviously so low.

He looked out of his living room window but could see nothing, and so went outside.

He then saw the lights from an object flying east to west, across Morthern road and heading towards Sheffield.

The "aircraft" had typical port and starboard 'wing-tip lights', and a number of "inboard" lights at the supposed centre of the object, which strobed and flashed. He was uncertain of the colour of these lights.

Although he could not discern any body or shape behind the lights, he assumed that there was one, and that it would be "wider than it was deep".

The object then passed over his house at an estimated altitude of "100-150" feet, although in his initial report that came to me via David Clarke, he had estimated the rather more alarming (and unlikely) "telegraph pole height."

As it passed overhead, he thought that, judging by the distance between the 'wing-tip lights', it had to be at least 30-40 feet wide. "Certainly wider than the house."

Interestingly, the witness referred to the 'object' as an aircraft all the while, and

categorically stated that it had the sound of "a turbo-prop engine, not a jet engine".

He actually kept saying that he couldn't be completely sure about particular details. It then flew steadily East to West, towards Sheffield Airport, where he expected to lose it in the lights of Sheffield, but then it turned North until it was lost from sight.

He spoke to couple across the road in their 70s/80s who also heard the plane's engines and said they heard the same thing every now and again in the early hours of the morning.

The witness' son flies helicopters for a living, and the witness says that he is well aware of helicopters and aeroplanes, and that he has never seen any aircraft fly so low over his home before. He said that it definitely was not a helicopter.

I checked with Sheffield Airport and that there was nothing in the air that night, not even the air ambulance.

Conclusion

We must always take a witness' judge of altitudes, speeds, sizes etc with a bagfull of salt, but even though the aircraft was probably not as low as 100-150 feet, I think we can assume that it was low, certainly lower than anything major flying from any of the other major airports.

As mentioned, the witness himself is sure that the 'UFO' was actually an aeroplane, probably a light aircraft, and I must agree.

The only 'mystery', if indeed there is one worth pursuing, is where the aircraft was from, and where it was going at such an early hour.

One possibility is one of the infamous 'drug planes' which are rumoured to fly into remote areas with cargos of narcotics, which are dropped in specified areas such as moorland, and picked up by waiting accomplices. (See *the still-unidentified light aircraft reported during the Howden Moor Incident, and the Charlton Brook Dam case, PRB Vol.2#5, November 1998*)

The case, however, is not yet closed and any updates will be reported in PRB.